

VOLUNTARY SERVICE

NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York

Aug./Sept./Oct. 2005 • Volume 5, Issue 3

A New Career Through Volunteering

Voluntary Service is actively recruiting retired VA employees for volunteer positions across the Network. As former employees of VA, these individuals bring forth a wealth of skills, talent and knowledge that are integral in helping us support new and expanded health care programs for veterans.

The following is just a snapshot of two of our former VA employees who are now volunteering for us:

Albany

Normally when a VA employee retires and then is interested in becoming a VA volunteer, we encourage the person to work in an area that is completely different than the work they retired from. **Patricia Day** however, retired from her position in

Sterile Processing (SPD) and then came back to her same work site as a volunteer. She is a Certified Medical Supply Technician and can do any process in SPD. There have been times when the unit has been short-staffed and she has picked up the slack as if she were still working for pay. Her co-

workers know they can count on her to do a specific amount of workload each day. Not only is she a big help to them, but they also enjoy seeing her each day. Pat was chosen Volunteer of the Month for May 2005.

Canandaigua

Eileen Clutter retired in 1982 after being employed by the Canandaigua VA Medical Center for 26 1/2 years. Her career spanned different areas within the hospital, where she worked in clerical positions in Psychology, Podiatry, Dental and Medical Administration Service where she subsequently retired. Eileen said,

"When computers were introduced to the workplace, I decided it was time to retire."

Working with veterans and caring for veterans are her passion. She is

heavily involved in the American Legion Auxiliary in Canandaigua and began volunteering on September 23, 2003 and has since accumulated more than 1,000 hours. Eileen spends hours visiting with patients in the hospice unit and assisting the nursing staff in various other assignments while there.

Eileen has also incorporated her love of sewing and quilting into her volunteering. She made a variety of *Touch for Life* pillows for the comfort of the patients, as well as a beautiful quilt that was used as a fundraiser for the volunteer program.

Although Eileen's retirement was a loss for the Medical Center it was certainly a gain for Voluntary Service and the veteran population at the VA in Canandaigua!

If you are a former VA employee interested in volunteering, contact the Volunteer Office at a Medical Center near you. The opportunities are endless!

*You make a living by
what you get, but you
make a life by what
you give.*

Winston Churchill



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Web Site

www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.html



The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Produced by Network 2 Communications Department. Printed by veterans in the Pre-Vocational Apprenticeship Program, Bath VAMC.



Comments

If you have any questions, an address correction, story idea, comment, etc. please write to:

Editor, Voluntary Service Newsletter
Network 2 Communications
465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620

Please be sure to include your phone number with all correspondence.

The Importance of Volunteers In Today's Health Care Environment

The responsibilities you carry out as a volunteer are very important in the overall performance of our Medical Centers in providing quality health care. The work you do as a volunteer assists and supports both our patients and staff. Your volunteer responsibilities compliment and enhance our ability to insure patient satisfaction, provide quality care and treat more veterans. This is demonstrated by our national achievements listed below.

Our Network leads the 21 Veterans Health Administration Networks (VHA) in Outpatient Satisfaction that includes:

- Access to care
- Provider waiting times
- Courtesy (tied for first place)

In clinical waiting times our Network ranked 8 out of the 21 Networks for new patients and sixth with established patients.

In patient growth, we were the sixth highest (+ 4.63%) among the 21 VHA Networks.

Volunteer programs like our Greeter Program, My HealthVet, and the Comping Program all assist us in providing good customer service. The outpatient clinical reminder telephone calls and the shuttle bus service all impact our ability to care for veterans. Hosting speaking engagements and co-hosting special events that inform veterans about their benefits helps us spread the word about important VA issues and VA health care.

We could not optimally encourage veterans to use their VA health care benefits or deliver quality health care in a patient centered environment if it were not for the time and effort you give as a volunteer to our nation's veterans.

Thank you.

William F. Feeley
Network Director



William F. Feeley
Network Director





CARES Update

The Local Advisory Panel (LAP) for the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) was held Wednesday, April 21, 2005 at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center. The public meeting was held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on VA's national consultant, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, methodology, tools, and options development to implement former VA Secretary, Anthony Principi's, decision for the Canandaigua VA announced in May 2004.

That decision includes:

- Developing a plan to construct a new multi-specialty clinic and nursing home complex to replace the patient care facilities currently located on the Canandaigua campus,
- Ensure that the decision to dispose of or REUSE excess VA property serves to enhance the Department's mission,
- All patient care services currently in place at the Canandaigua VAMC will be accommodated in the new facilities,
- The new facilities would remain in Canandaigua but the Master Plan will include a careful study of the appropriate size and location of the new facilities, as well as a detailed cost-effectiveness analysis to guarantee maximum use of VA resources,
- The transfer of acute inpatient psychiatric beds from Canandaigua VA to the Buffalo and Syracuse VA Medical Centers.

If you were not able to attend the meeting and would like to provide comment you can write:

VA CARES Studies
PO Box 1427
Washington Grove, MD 20880-1427
or visit the CARES Web site at:
www.va.gov/CARES

No One Dies Alone

By Susan Engel, RN, MSN, VA Western New York Healthcare System at Buffalo

One hundred years ago, people died quickly - usually as a result of an injury or infection. Family and friends surrounded the bedside and there was community participation and support. Today the dying process is extended. Sometimes it is a lonely experience. Most of us will die from a chronic disease, in a hospital setting instead of our own beds. Some patients outlive their family and friends or for other reasons, find themselves alone at the end-of-life. Compassionate companions can assist medical providers by providing the vital pieces needed at this time by sitting quietly, listening to patients' stories, playing music and fulfilling last wishes.

In an effort to reverse the loneliness that can occur, a search for a program that was already developed and proven successful began. No One Dies Alone (NODA) seemed to fit our needs. **Sandra Clark**, CCRN at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon developed the program. She enthusiastically supported our desire to promote NODA within VA. With the help of an

interdisciplinary team that includes **Kelly Clark**, Voluntary Service; **Mark Francis**, Voluntary Service; **Sue Engel**, RN, MSN; **Deborah Medakovich**, RN, MSN; **Mary Skibinski**, Social Work Executive; and Psychologist, **Dr. Karl Frohm**, a program is evolving to meet the needs of veterans who find themselves alone in the final stage of life. The NODA project has attracted approximately 25 regularly scheduled volunteers and 17 (off duty) employees. Orientation programs are scheduled as the need arises and consists of two training sessions.

Anyone can initiate the NODA program by calling **Deborah Medakovich** or the nursing supervisor after hours. Trained phone coordinators, **Walter Kwasniewski**, **Joe Panzarella** or **Bernie Bruenn** will contact the volunteer for their chosen shift to come in and sit with the patient.

An excerpt provided by **Jim Cranz**, a compassionate companion, reflects his experience:

"...I was ready and, boy, was I eager. The call came! I was so happy to now be involved. My phone coordinator had briefed me on the specifics regarding the patient, Mr. K. I introduced myself to the nurse at the nurse's station who was kind enough to walk me down to Mr. K's room. When I walked into Mr. K's room my stomach became knotted...past experience, training "all out the window" at that moment. It was a nervous sign I had experienced before...it too would pass. All nervousness passed when Mr. K said "hi". ...The next three nights were uneventful. Mr. K slept most of the

(see No One Dies Alone, page 11)





Spotlight on *Albany*

Golden Age Games - May 21 - 26, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Albany sent three veterans and one recreation therapist to the Golden Age Games. Our VAVS Representative for Italian-American War Veterans Auxiliary, **Barbara Kidd**, raised her own travel funds to volunteer at the event again this year.

CALENDAR CORNER

August

TBA - Student Volunteer Awards Ceremony

Auditorium

Awards will be presented to participants in the summer youth program.

September

16 - POW/MIA Remembrance Day - 11:00 a.m.

Auditorium

All are invited to attend this powerful, moving ceremony to address the grief and loss of those soldiers who have yet to return to us or whose remains are still unrepatriated, and also to honor the spirit and courage of those soldiers and their families.

20 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:00 p.m.

Auditorium

25 - American Gold Star Mothers Day - 2:00 p.m.

Evergreen Cemetery, Central Avenue, Schenectady

October

1 - Capital Region Veterans Stand Down - 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Colonie Elks, Rt. 155, Latham

VA, New York State and County offices will staff information and health screening booths.

16 - Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk - 9:00 a.m.

Gather at VAMC parking lot

Walk at Washington Park, Albany

Employees and volunteers walk as a team to raise money for local men and women to help researchers fight this disease and some day find a cure. Contact Karen Haas 626-5506 to walk or to support a walker.

17-23- Creative Arts Festival, Denver, Colorado

Annual Mandatory Safety Training

We have a duty to our veterans to provide them with the best care possible and that includes ensuring they are safe while in our care. Only by keeping ourselves safe can we continue to provide that quality care. Each fall, all volunteers and employees are requested to attend the safety fair in the auditorium. Exhibits focusing on safety topics (infection control, workplace violence and behavioral emergencies, fire safety, sexual harassment, age related competencies and emergency preparedness) will be available. You will meet the annual JCAHO training requirement by journeying through the exhibits that review policies and procedures that promote a safe environment. Be sure to sign the attendance sheet before leaving the auditorium so you get credit for attending.

Wish List

- ☐ Canteen books for haircuts
- ☐ CDTA bus tokens
- ☐ Cans of decaf coffee
- ☐ Jars of powdered coffee creamer
- ☐ Sneakers (men's - all sizes, new only)
- ☐ Denture adhesive
- ☐ Deodorant (small size)
- ☐ Funds for:
 - Replacement vans for Transportation Program
 - Sending patients to National Rehab Games and Creative Arts Festival
 - Maintaining fish tanks in patient waiting rooms
 - Purchasing wheelchairs





Albany (continued)

Bikers Honor Veterans

The Veterans Motorcycle Club Nomads held a rally, raffle and party to benefit the inpatients of the Stratton VA Medical Center on July 9. This was the Second Annual VA Run. More than 200 bikers started at the Sawmill Tavern in Schenectady at noon and rode with police escort to the medical center parking lot. After meeting with patients and staff, they returned to the Sawmill Tavern to enjoy food, music and dancing.

Members of the club are deployed in Iraq and around the world. Bikers from all over the country assembled for this event. A custom-built Harley Davidson was raffled off, with all the profit over the cost of the bike being donated to VA. The money raised by this event supports Voluntary Service's *Because We Care* program to provide clothing and toiletry items to indigent men and women veterans.



Volunteer Opportunities

- ☛ Snack & Chat Cart (Friday mornings): provide a friendly visit and nourishment to hospitalized veterans on the 9th floor
- ☛ Laboratory (weekday evenings, weekend and holiday afternoons): answer phones and bring specimens to lab areas
- ☛ Customer Service: assist Patient Advocate and Customer Service Coordinator with patients; help identify patients with special needs and potential problems for staff follow-up
- ☛ Good Neighbor Program (Albany, Colonie, Delmar, Loudonville, Schenectady and Voorheesville): visit homebound veterans for one to two hours each week to provide caregivers a much-needed break
- ☛ Drivers (weekday and on-call)
- ☛ Office/Clerical Assistance

Network 2 Volunteer Staff

Albany

Karen Haas, Manager
(518) 626-5506

Stephanie Bonenfant, Specialist
(518) 626-5508

Bath

Susan DeSalvo, Manager
(607) 664-4773

Sis Conrad, Specialist
(607) 664-4772

Richard Conklin, Clerk
(607) 664-4771

Canandaigua

Robin Johnson, Manager
(585) 393-7759

Patti Ciancaglini, Specialist
(585) 393-7761

Syracuse

Bob Hawes, Manager
(315) 425-4681

Kathy Stepien, Assistant
(315) 425-4315

Western New York (Buffalo and Batavia)

Mark Francis, Manager
(716) 862-8667

Cheryl Boyd, Specialist
(716) 862-8672

Kathleen Martin, Specialist
(585) 344-3330

Kelly Clark, Intern (716) 862-8671





Spotlight on *Bath*

Echo Taps

It's amazing how 24-notes of music can have such a profound effect on Americans. It is rare to find someone who isn't moved to tears when they hear the sound of "Taps."

The Echo Taps program kicked off on May 20, 2005 with a banquet at the Wings of Eagles Discovery Center in Big Flats. The keynote speaker, **Jari Villanueva** is the country's foremost authority on U.S. military bugle calls (especially "Taps"). He was responsible for moving the bugle used at President John F. Kennedy's funeral from The Smithsonian to Arlington where it remains on display in the Visitor Center. Mr. Villanueva has sounded "Taps" over 2,000 times at Arlington National Cemetery and other cemeteries.

On Armed Forces Day, May 21, hundreds of buglers, trumpeters and other horn players boarded buses that fanned out along 41 miles of road in the Southern Tier of New York to perform a cascading rendition of "Taps."

Opening ceremonies took place at Woodlawn National Cemetery, Elmira

with the **Honorable Richard A. Wannemacher Jr.**, Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs as keynote speaker.

Fifteen-year-old **Hannah Sollecito** of Baldwinsville (a descendant of Union Army General **Daniel Butterfield** who was credited with composing "Taps" with his brigade bugler, **Oliver Norton**, during the Civil War) started the 24-note melody.

Once the first three notes played, a second bugler started, and then three

notes later the next. Each musician, 866 in all, young and old, some in wheelchairs, others just barely old enough to hold their instruments, representing 30 states and separated by less than one hundred yards, performed a full rendition of "Taps."

The dramatic musical tableau rolled through the Chemung River Valley to Corning, before tilting northwest at speed of 20 miles an hour. Thousands of spectators lined the winding route and stood at rapt attention as the music came through. Some saluted, some put their hands to their hearts but most wiped away tears. After each player completed their rendition of "Taps" a second "wave" was played and videotaped

for the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest line of brass instruments playing the same tune.

The final haunting chords arrived in Bath three hours later, delivered by **George Taylor** and **Fran Look**. Taylor, 74, of Delaware is a former Korean War Intelligence Specialist and has played at 10,000 funerals since 1945. Local veteran, Fran Look, 80 is a former WW II paratrooper still performing at dozens of funerals each year.

Closing ceremonies were held at the Bath VA Medical Center with keynote speaker Network Director, **William F. Feeley**. The Caledonia Highlanders Bag Pipe Band and the Empire Statesman provided entertainment. The Color Guard was provided by the Winneck American Legion "Dough Boys" and the Honor Guard was performed by the Robert Austin American Legion Post. The highlight of the closing ceremonies was the assembly of 866 horn players for one mass playing of "Taps," conducted by **Les Hampton**, Echo Taps Chairman. As the piece concluded, a lone bugler could be heard in the distance on the hills of the cemetery. Approximately 143 VA staff and volunteers from around the Network assisted with closing ceremonies.



Photo by: John Babbitt



Spotlight on *Camandagira*

Wish List

Monetary donations to the General Post Fund to assist with a variety of patient needs and recreational activities are always accepted. Contact Voluntary Service for more information.

- ☐ Sponsored luncheons, pizza parties, trips
- ☐ Tickets to sporting events, zoo, and other similar outings
- ☐ Styrofoam plates, bowls, cups, napkins and plastic dinnerware
- ☐ Personal care items (shampoo, shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, new socks and underwear, etc.)
- ☐ Gift Certificates for Ponderosa, Wal-Mart, Tops, Wegmans, McDonalds, Wendy's, movies, pizza, etc.
- ☐ Postage stamps
- ☐ Restaurant type, stainless steel oven/stove
- ☐ Non perishable foods for Hospice Unit
- ☐ Wallets
- ☐ Prepaid phone cards
- ☐ Slippers with rubber/leather soles
- ☐ T-shirts
- ☐ White socks (men's and women's)
- ☐ New underwear (men's and women's)
- ☐ Pajamas and robes (women's)
- ☐ Wind up alarm clocks
- ☐ Street vender type cart with umbrella
- ☐ Tickets for Sunset Bowl in Geneva

- ☐ Baking ingredients
- ☐ Toenail and fingernail clippers
- ☐ Motorized recliners for the Hospice Unit (4)
- ☐ VCR for the Hospice Unit
- ☐ Decaf coffee and condiments
- ☐ Old CDs and movies *
- ☐ Microwave *
- ☐ Push lawnmower for Canandaigua Veterans Club *
- ☐ Harmonica *
- ☐ Fish tank
- ☐ Woodworking materials
- ☐ Birdfeeder (approx. \$75) *
- ☐ Artist easel or draftsman table *
- ☐ Benches/Adirondack chairs *
- ☐ Funds for:
 - Wheelchair van at Canandaigua
 - Pontoon Boat

*New items

Volunteer Opportunities

- 🌱 Gardening groups willing to beautify the clinic with flowers and plants each season. - Rochester
- 👤 Companion therapy - Canandaigua
- 👤 Special care companion therapy for Palliative Care Ward - Canandaigua
- 👤 Reminder phone calls to patients for appointments - Rochester
- 👤 Clerical assistance - Rochester and Canandaigua
- 👤 Drivers - Rochester and Canandaigua
- 👤 Performance groups (musical, hobby, performance, etc.) - Canandaigua
- 👤 Laundry assistance - Canandaigua
- 👤 Wood Shop, 1867 Mt. Hope Ave. - Rochester
- 👤 Information desk * - Rochester
- 👤 Computer lab * - Canandaigua

**New Assignments*

CALENDAR CORNER

August

- 3 - Meyer & McGuire Concert - 6:00 p.m.**
Bldg. 5., Auditorium
Escorts Needed

- 10 - Seneca Falls Community Band - 6:00 p.m.
Bldg. 5., Auditorium
Escorts Needed

- 18 - Volunteer Picnic and Student Award Ceremony - 5:30 p.m.**
Courtyard I, Pavilion

September

- 14 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:00 p.m.**
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
- 16 - POW Remembrance**
Activities TBA



Canandaigua (continued)

National Volunteer Week

Wow! What a week for our volunteers. It's easy to overlook the importance of volunteers because they rarely sing their own praises - yet they change so many lives. Canandaigua launched National Volunteer week by offering cake in the volunteer lounge in Canandaigua and Rochester every day. We saw numerous signs of appreciation throughout the facilities with gifts of thanks, luncheons, balloons, etc. To conclude the week of celebration, our annual Volunteer Awards Banquet was held at the Burgundy Basin Inn recognizing the more than 180 volunteers in attendance for their efforts.

Among those receiving awards were this year's recipients of the *Above and Beyond Award*. This year's recipients were: **Frances and Robert Rugaber, James Sloan, Eileen Clutter, and Harry Boeff**. Also being honored this year were four volunteers in the *20,000 Hour Plus Club* and our top volunteer hour



Robert Ratliff, Ph.D., FACHE, Acting Canandaigua VA Medical Center Director (left), Robert and Frances Rugaber (center) and VA staff member Jane Wilson (right).

recipient, **Terry Muscato** who has donated an incredible 47,500 hours. We are VERY proud of all of our volunteers and feel it an honor to be able to honor those who honor our veterans!

Rochester Outpatient Clinic

Through the generosity of our volunteers and Planetree funds, a waterfall/fountain was purchased in September for the lobby of the clinic. With the help of employees, the fountain is decorated throughout the year to celebrate each season and holiday. The lights above the fountain are changed to match the décor. "Numerous compliments from patients, their spouses, staff and outside visitors to the clinic have been received," said **Ken Piazza**, Rochester Outpatient Clinic Manager. "Another unanticipated effect has been that a small, but growing group of employees have volunteered time to decorate the fountain area for every season and holiday. I suspect that this may be a bit of fun for the staff involved and these periodic changes to the decorations is what the patients really enjoy. I think they can't wait to see what comes next!"



Reminder Phone Calls

Everyone needs a reminder now and then.

So often in our busy lives it is a nice feeling to get a phone call,

"This is Bob from the Rochester Outpatient

Clinic. I'm just calling to remind you that you have an appointment on..."

Rochester Outpatient Clinic is fortunate to have a group of volunteers that do just that! Every day is covered with a volunteer to call our veterans to remind them of their appointment. The patients are thankful and the staff are thrilled that their "no shows" have decreased dramatically. One of the volunteers has been so dedicated, that he was one of the biggest solicitors of other volunteers to make sure that the clinic was staffed with volunteers for every day to make certain veterans were reminded of their appointments. Another volunteer even was able to communicate to some of the patients in Spanish. Canandaigua also has volunteers that make phone call reminders to our veterans.

These friendly and helpful reminders are a much-needed asset and contribute to the success of the Rochester Outpatient Clinic and Canandaigua VA Medical Center.



Bob Baker, ROPC volunteer





Spotlight on Syracuse

More than 200 staff, volunteers and family attended our 52nd Annual Recognition Event on May 1 at the Country Club of Syracuse. The luncheon honored our dedicated and hard working volunteers. **Kathy Stepien**, VAVS Program Assistant commented, "It was a beautiful day to give thanks to all our wonderful volunteers!"

Syracuse Volunteer of the Year

Bill Fowler has been a volunteer at the Syracuse VA Medical Center for over 34 years. His dedication and assistance to the VA includes his service to the Eye Clinic and Audiology/Speech Pathology Service. Audiology writes, "Bill has become an integral part of our team. We would not be able to function as smoothly or as efficiently if it were not for his dedicated 20 hours of volunteer service each week."



Bill is honest, dependable, responsible and well liked by everyone he volunteers with. He works well independently as well as coordinating with the paid staff when necessary. His ability to assess current needs and to act appropriately without a lot of unnecessary supervision is invaluable. He assists the office manager of Audiology with organization of incoming hearing aid orders, answering phones, greeting patients, and

setting up the necessary documents for each veteran's visit. In addition, he assists the Audiology staff by mailing repaired hearing aids to veterans, distributing various documents around the Medical Center, and escorting patients when needed.

Bill also helped this department with its transition to a total paperless record in June. He has reviewed and organized paper records, separating reference audiograms and hearing aid invoices for further disposition and also prepared patient contact sheets and hearing aids, organizing them by appointment date. This has saved audiologists from using valuable patient service time to organize materials for a hearing aid evaluation.

Bill's rapport with the patients and staff is excellent. His characteristic smile and willingness to work with staff and patients is exemplary. Outside of his VA volunteerism Bill is active in many American Legion activities as well.

Minority Veteran's Council Formed

The Syracuse VAVS Manager attended the first Minority Veteran's Council meeting in April. The council will advise the Medical Center about concerns of the minority community, as well as act as a recruiting/communication conduit to minority veterans in the Syracuse area. We are reaching out to minority veterans and all minorities to consider becoming volunteers at VA.

News from the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 103

In April, the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 103 honored VAVS Manager, **Robert Hawes** with the *2005 Individual Supporter of the Year Award*. VVA Chapter 103 was responsible for the recent "Vietnam Wall Experience" visiting the New York State Fairgrounds. Over 100,000 people visited the display.

Staff Recognition Award

The Syracuse VAVS Staff Recognition Award is presented to the Therapeutic Recreation Department. This award, given by volunteers, recognizes an employee or department that best epitomizes a positive relationship between volunteers and paid staff.

Therapeutic Recreation uses various treatments to promote the independent functioning and enhancement of optimal health and well-being in patients. Participatory programs, offered during weekends, evenings and holidays include: bingo, nite @ races, socials, off station dinners, board and card games, and holiday celebrations. Talking books, magazines, large print books, board games, playing cards, word search and crossword puzzles, videos, music tapes, walkmans, and craft projects (models, wood projects, leather crafts and paintings) are also available through volunteer donations.

Our volunteers rate the Recreation Department top notch. Their ability to work with the volunteers to help the patients makes them noble recipients of this award.





Spotlight on Western NY

"Sending" Messages Abroad

Williamsville North High School student **Steven Levine** wanted to pursue an Eagle Scout project that would brighten the spirits of men and woman serving in the armed forces. He originally planned to organize a holiday card making effort for the service members overseas. However, Steven found out that the federal government would no longer allow this due to safety issues. However, he found out that he could write cards on the computer by using e-mail.

Steven thought through this idea even more and decided he wanted to have veterans/others send "best wishes" to those who are actively serving. The Volunteer Program Office at Buffalo in conjunction with **Susan Cotter** an instructor at

the Veterans Skills Center (a VA partnership with the Maryvale School District's Continuing Education Program) would help provide computer access and assistance in order to send messages to the troops.

Steven and his scouts developed an information sheet that allowed those who do not know how to use a computer an opportunity to write a message that the scouts would send on their behalf. Approximately 450 messages were sent from the Skills Center and another 200 from Vietnam Veterans Chapter #77 and area nursing homes.

A special "thank you" to Steven Levine and Boy Scout Troop #445 members: **Adam Bainbridge, Louis Callari, Devon Edwards, Matt Gorfien, Steve Gorfien, Daniel Hughes, William Hughes, Chris Levine, Rob Lord, Edward Wojtkowiak**, and Scout Master **Michael Levine**.



Scouts send email greetings with the help of Scout Master, Michael Levine.

CALENDAR CORNER

August

13 - REST (RE-entry Support Team) Picnic - 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Buffalo, Medical Center Grounds

14 - Veterans Day at the Erie County Fair - 1:00 p.m. - Parade
Erie County Fairgrounds, Hamburg

31 - Patient Art Show - 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Buffalo, Room 301

September

14 - VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Batavia, Building #4, Auditorium

American Red Cross Blood Drive - 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Buffalo, Room 301

16 - POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony - 9:00 a.m.
Hearthstone Manor, Depew

October

1 - Commanders Day - 9:00 a.m.
Buffalo, Room 301

19 - VAVS Annual Service Organizations Awards Dinner - 6:30 p.m.
Hearthstone Manor, Depew

22 - Chinese Auction - 1:00 p.m.
Batavia, Building #4, Auditorium





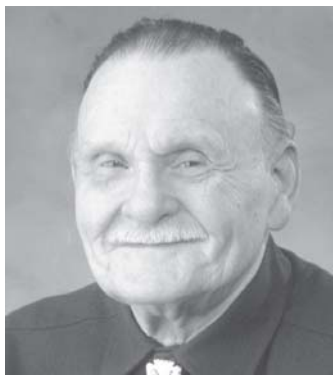
WNY (continued)

Volunteer Milestones - Top Recipients



Batavia

Maryanna Sitzlow - 35,000 Hours
Military Order of the Cootie
Auxiliary - VAVS Representative,
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary



Buffalo

Edwin Mills - 20,000 Hours
Army & Navy Union, USA - VAVS
Representative, Destroyer Escort
Sailors Association, Disabled
American Veterans

Volunteer Opportunities

- ☛ Clerical - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Computer: assist residents with computer skills - Batavia
- ☛ Drivers, DAV Volunteer Transportation Program - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Drink Cart: serve coffee/cold drinks to residents in their rooms - Batavia
- ☛ Greeters - Buffalo
- ☛ Guest Parking Lot Shuttle - Buffalo
- ☛ Patient/Ward Visitation(s) - Buffalo
- ☛ Patient Escort/Transport - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Pharmacy: clerical duties, as well as assist in transporting various items when necessary throughout facility - Buffalo
- ☛ Recreational Aide: assist with/organize activities with residents - Batavia



Wish List

- ☐ Funding for:
 - Patient Activities - Buffalo and Batavia
 - Travel for patients in need - Buffalo
 - DAV Transportation Program - Buffalo and Batavia (donations must go directly to DAV Department of New York)
 - ☐ Stair Climber - Batavia
 - ☐ Art Therapy Supplies - Buffalo
 - ☐ Coffee Cart Program - Buffalo and Batavia
 - ☐ 9" Color Televisions - Buffalo and Batavia
 - ☐ Comping Coupons - Buffalo and Batavia
 - ☐ Welcome Kits - Buffalo
- Note: Before purchasing any item, please contact the Volunteer Program Office to determine if the item has already been purchased*
Batavia - (585) 344-3330
Buffalo - (716) 862-8672

No One Dies Alone (continued from page 3)

time...I would get up and check on Mr. K regularly. When I looked into his glazed eyes, which offered no recognition, I would talk to him about my day, weather and whatever. You see, no one can convince me that Mr. K did not know I was there with him..."

If you are interested in this program in Buffalo contact:

Kelly Clark, BS, MS Volunteer Office - (716) 862-8671

Sue Engel, RN, MSN - (716) 862-3158

Deborah Medakovich, RN, MSN - (716) 862-6516

Additional information may be found at:

www.va.gov/visns/visn02/wny/noda/index.cfm

Advanced Illness/Palliative Care programs are available at VA Medical Centers across the Network. Contact your Voluntary Service Program Office for more information about opportunities near you.





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Albany, NY 12208
(518) 626-5000

Batavia

222 Richmond Avenue
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 343-7500

Bath

76 Veterans Avenue
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 664-4000

Buffalo

3495 Bailey Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215
(716) 834-9200

Canandaigua

400 Fort Hill Avenue
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 394-2000

Syracuse

800 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 425-4400

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics:

Auburn

Auburn Memorial Hospital
17 Lansing St.
Auburn, NY 13021
(315) 255-7002

Bainbridge

109 North Main Street
Bainbridge, NY 13733
(607) 967-8590

Binghamton

425 Robinson Street
Binghamton, NY 13001
(607) 772-9100

Carthage

3 Bridge Street
Carthage, NY 13619
(315) 493-4180

Catskill

Greene Medical Bldg.
159 Jefferson Heights
Catskill, NY 12414
(518) 943-7515

Clifton Park

1673 Route 9
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(518) 383-8506

Cortland

1129 Commons Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045
(607) 662-1517

Dunkirk

The Resource Center
325 Central Avenue
Dunkirk, NY 14048
(716) 366-2122

Elizabethtown

P.O. Box 277, Park St.
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
(518) 873-3295

Elmira

Health Services Bldg.
200 Madison Ave.
Suite 2E
Elmira, NY 14901
(877) 845-3247

Fonda

Camp Mohawk Plaza
Rt. 30A
Fonda, NY 12068
(518) 853-1247

Glens Falls

84 Broad Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 798-6066

Ithaca

10 Arrowwood Drive
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-4680

Jamestown

The Resource Center
890 East Second Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 661-1447

Kingston

63 Hurley Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 331-8322

Lackawanna

Our Lady of Victory
Family Care Center
227 Ridge Road
Lackawanna, NY 14218
(716) 822-5944

Lockport

Ambulatory Care Center
5875 S. Transit Road
Lockport, NY 14094
(716) 433-2025

Malone

183 Park Street, Suite 3
Malone, NY 12953
(518) 481-2545

Massena

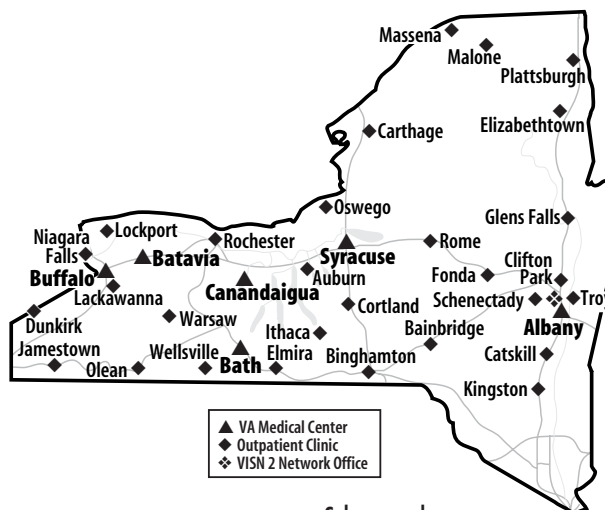
1 Hospital Drive
Massena, NY 13662
(315) 769-4253

Niagara Falls

2201 Pine Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
1-(800) 223-4810

Olean

465 North Union Street
Olean, NY 14760
(716) 373-7709



Oswego

Seneca Hills Health
Services Center
County Route 45A
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-0925

Plattsburgh

43 Durkee Street
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 561-8310

Rochester

465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 463-2600

Rome

125 Brookley Road
Bldg. 510
Rome, NY 13441
(315) 334-7100

Schenectady

1322 Gerling St. Sheridan Plaza
Schenectady, NY 12308
(518) 346-3334

Troy

295 River Street
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 274-7707

Warsaw

Wyoming County
Community Hospital
400 N. Main Street
Warsaw, NY 14569
(585) 344-3355

Wellsville

Jones Memorial Hospital Health
Care Center
13 Loder Street
Wellsville, NY 14895
(585) 596-2056

VA Health Care On The Web
www.va.gov/visns/visn02

For Reliable Health Information On The Web
www.myhealth.va.gov

Veterans Service Contact Center
1-888-823-9656

For information on eligibility, VA health care, benefits,
enrollment or questions on your billing statement